

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08  
EA-10 FRB-03 INR-10 IO-13 NEA-10 NSAE-00 USIA-06  
OPIC-03 SP-02 TRSE-00 LAB-04 SIL-01 AGRE-00  
OMB-01 SS-15 NSC-05 STR-07 /117 W  
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R 031450Z MAR 78  
FM AMEMBASSY ROME  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1005  
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN  
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY PARIS  
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GERMANY  
USDOCOSOUTH

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USOECN ALSO FOR EMBASSY  
USDOCOSOUTH FOR INTAF

E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: ELAB, PINT, IT  
SUBJECT: NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF THE CGIL SOCIALISTS

1. SUMMARY. THE SOCIALIST FACTION OF THE COMMUNIST-  
DOMINATED LABOR CONFEDERATION CGIL CONDUCTED A THREE-  
DAY POLITICAL CONFERENCE IN ROME AS PART OF THE PREPARA-  
TIONS FOR THE IMMINENT PSI NATIONAL CONGRESS. PSI  
SECRETARY CRAXI SCORED A MAJOR TRIUMPH, EMERGING WITH  
THE ENTHUSIASTIC SUPPORT OF THE CONFEREES FOR HIS OWN  
CANDIDACY, AND FOR THE DIMINUTION OF PARTY FACTIONALISM  
WHICH IS ONE OF CRAXI'S PRIMARY OBJECTIVES. THE MEETING  
ALSO SERVED AS AN ARENA OF CONFRONTATION BETWEEN THE  
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TWO LEADING YOUNG SOCIALIST LABOR LEADERS, MARIANETTI  
(CGIL) AND BENVENUTO (UIL). WHAT THE TWO HAD IN COMMON  
WAS THEIR SUPPORT FOR CRAXI. THEY DIVERGED, HOWEVER, ON  
THE SUBJECT OF THE COMMUNISTS, WITH BENVENUTO CONCENTRAT-  
ING MUCH MORE ON PCI SHORTCOMINGS AND MARIANETTI TENDING  
TO EMPHASIZE THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE COMMUNISTS HAVE  
EVOLVED POSITIVELY. END SUMMARY.

2. WHILE THE UNIONS IN GENERAL AWAIT, WITH INCRASING IMPATIENCE, THE RESOLUTION OF THE POLITICAL CRISIS AND THE FORMATION OF AGOVERNMENT WITH WHICH TO NEGOTIATE THEIR OFFER TO EXCHANGE LABOR RESTRAINT FOR FIRM PLANS TO ACHIEVE FULL EMPLOYMENT, THE SOCIALISTS ARE PROCEEDING WITH PREPARATIONS FOR THEIR NATIONAL PARTY CONGRESS TO BE HELD IN ABOUT FOUR WEEKS. IN THIS CONTEXT, THE CGIL SOCIALISTS RECENTLY HELD A THREE-DAY NATIONAL CONFERENCE IN ROME. ON THE CONCLUDING DAY, IN ADDITION TO A PACKED HOUSE OF 2500 DELEGATES, ATTENDEES INCLUDED PSI SECRETARY CRAXI AS WELL AS SUCH TOP LABOR LEADERS AS CGIL SEC GEN LAMA (PCI), CISL SEC GEN MACARIO (DC), UIL SEC GEN BENVENUTO (PSI) AND UIL NATIONAL SECRETARY VANNI (PRI)

3. THE OSTENSIBLE PURPOSE OF THE CONFERENCE WAS TO ESTABLISH INPUT BY THE CGIL SOCIALISTS TO THE CONGRESS DELIBERATIONS THROUGH A DISCUSSION OF THE PSI LEADERSHIP'S POLICY DOCUMENT; THE UIL SOCIALISTS ARE HOLDING SIMILAR CONFERENCES ON A REGIONAL BASIS. WHILE THE DOCUMENT WAS DULY DEABTED, THE EVENT TURNED OUT BASICALLY TO BE A MAJOR CRAXI RALLY. CRAXI SET THE PACE WHEN, IN AN ALLUSION TO PCI SECRETARY BERLINGUER'S DECLARATION THE PREVIOUS DAY TO A NORTH ITALIAN LABOR AUDIENCE THAT THE COMMUNIST PARTY MUST BE BOTH CONSERVATIVE AND REVOLUTIONARY, CRAXI DECLARED THE SOCIALISTS TO BE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PROGRESSIVE AND REFORMIST. TAKING CRACKS AT THE COMMUNISTS PROVED TO BE THE MOST POPULAR EVENT OF THE DAY.

4. IN HIS SPEECH TO THE CONFERENCE, BENVENUTO EARNED FREQUENT APPLAUSE THROUGH A SERIES OF VEILED CRITICISMS OF THE COMMUNISTS, DEPLORING THE PCI'S SCANT RESPECT FOR PLURALISM, ITS TENDENCY TO DOMINATE THE LABOR SCENE, AND THE LACK OF AUTONOMY BETWEEN THE CGIL AND THE PCI. "THE CURRENT EMERGENCY CANNOT BE AN EXCUSE TO ATTENUATE POLITICAL AND SOCIAL PLURALISM, AND MUST NOT BE THE GROUNDS ON WHICH TO CEDE IN THE AREA OF CIVIL RIGHTS AND OF INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE LIBERTY, WHICH FORM INDISPENSABLE PARTS OF THE SOCIALIST SOCIETY. IN THIS AREA, OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE PCI, NO LESS THAN WITH THE CONSERVATIVE FORCES, CANNOT BUT CONTINUE TO BE BLUNT," BENVENUTO STATES.

5. CGIL DEPUTY SEC GEN MARIANETTI, TOO, MADE A FEW DIGS AT THE COMMUNISTS -- PRIMARILY IN ASSERTING THEIR APPETITE FOR POWER -- AND EARNED HIS BEST APPLAUSE AT THOSE MOMENTS. HE, TOO, SUPPORTED REDUCTION OF

FACTIONALISM WITHIN THE PARTY, ALTHOUGH ADDING THAT THIS MUST NOT BE TRANSLATED INTO ANY MONOPOLY OF WISDOM, OR SUPPRESSION OF DISSENT. ON THE LABOR SIDE, MARIANETTI STRESSED THE NEED FOR LABOR AUTONOMY. HE ADDED THAT SOCIALISTS AND COMMUNISTS DIFFER IN THEIR CONCEPT OF DEMOCRACY, BUT HE PRAISED THE EVOLUTION OF THE PCI IN RECENT YEARS, IN PARTICULAR THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE COMMUNISTS HAVE RESCINDED THE PRIMACY GIVEN TO ACHIEVING THE "HISTORIC COMPROMISE" WITH THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS. MARIANETTI STATED THAT THE SOCIALISTS COULD TAKE MUCH CREDIT FOR ACHIEVING THESE CHANGES IN THE PCI.

6. COVERAGE OF THE EVENTS IN THE COMMUNIST DAILY UNITA SOUGHT TO PUT TO BEST FACE ON MATTERS. "THE SOCIALISTS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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OF THE CGIL ARE FOR UNITY BETWEEN THE PCI AND THE PSI," WAS THE HEADLINE. THE ARTICLE SOUGHT TO HIGHLIGHT THE

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CONTRADICTIONS BETWEEN MARIANETTI AND BENVENUTO, ("THESE CHARGES OF SOCIALIST TRADE UNIONISM"), SUGGESTING THAT CRAXI RECONCILED THESE DIVERGENCIES BY BEING ABSENT DURING THE MORNING SESSIONS WHEN THE "CONTRASTS" EMERGED. UNITA COULD NOT RESIST OPENING ITS ACCOUNT WITH A DIG AT BOTH OF THE "CHARGERS". THE ARTICLE POINTED OUT THAT THE SOCIALIST COMPONENT IN THE CGIL HAS 30 PERCENT OF THE POSTS BUT ONLY 20PERCENT OF THE MEMBERS. EVEN SO, UNITA ADDED, THEY WERE MORE NUMEROUS THAN THE ENTIRE UILM

7. COMMENT. IF THE ROME MEETING WAS A WAYSTATION IN CRAXI'S APPARENTLY TRIPUMPHAL PARADE TOWARD REINFORCING HIS LEADERSHIP OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY, IT ALSO SERVED TO RENEW THE RIVALRY BETWEEN MARIANETTI AND BENVENUTO. EACH SEEKS TO BE PRINCIPAL SPOKESMAN FOR THE SOCIALISTS IN THE LABOR MOVEMENT. BOTH ARE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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IN THEIR EARLY FORTIES. MARIANETTI HAS THE ADVANTAGE OF NUMBERS (AS SUGGESTED BY UNITA, THERE MAY BE TWICE AS MANY SOCIALISTS IN THE CGIL AS IN THE UIL), BUT BENVENUTO HAS THE ADVANTAGE THAT HIS SOCIALISTS ARE IN A (PROBABLE) MAJORITY IN THE UIL, AND THAT HE HEADS AN ORGANIZATION WHICH, AT LEAST IN THE CCU FRAMEWORK, IS CO-EQUAL WITH CGIL AND CISL. BOTH MEN ARE REGARDED AS CRAXI PROTEGES. IT WAS, IN FACT, IN THEIR SUPPORT FOR CRAXI, AND FOR HIS PROPOSAL TO MINIMIZE SOCIALIST FACTIONALISM, THAT THE TWO MEN WERE ON COMMON GROUND. OTHERWISE, IT IS TO MARIANETTI'S ADVANTAGE TO EULOGIZE THE COMMUNISTS SO AS TO MAINTAIN MAXIMUM PCI INFLUENCE IN THE CGIL. BENVENUTO TENDS MUCH MORE TO TREAT THE COMMUNISTS AS RIVALS AND AS USURPERS OF WHAT OUGHT TO BE THE SOCIALIST PORTION OF THE POLITICAL (AND LABOR) SPECTRUM. HOLMES

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